



- - BAPTIST PRESS

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March 14, 1988

88-42

Georgia Judge Voids
Tift/Mercer Merger

N-10

FORSYTH, Ga. (BP)--Tift College, a Georgia Baptist women's school that was closed following its merger with Mercer University, has been given a new lease on life.

Monroe County Superior Court Judge Sam Whitmire has voided the 1986 merger of the two Baptist schools and ordered Tift trustees to prepare to re-open the 141-year-old college.

SavTift, a coalition of Tift alumnae and friends, greeted the news with elation. Mercer officials announced they will appeal the decision.

Tift trustees voted in June 1986 to transfer ownership of the college and all its assets to Mercer, and the plan was approved by the Georgia Baptist Convention executive committee. Five months after the merger, Mercer officials said they would close the Tift campus at the end of the 1986-87 academic year.

SavTift was created following that announcement, and the organization sued Tift trustees and Mercer to rescind the merger. SavTift also successfully sought a restraining order to prevent Mercer from using or selling the Tift property, located in Forsyth, about 60 miles south of Atlanta.

Whitmire's 40-page ruling declared Tift trustees violated their charter by giving the school's property and other assets to Mercer without permission from the court. It also noted Mercer failed to make a good-faith effort to keep the Forsyth campus open, and it determined Tift's financial situation did not mandate a merger.

The judge gave Tift's former trustees 15 days to decide if they will attempt to re-open the school. If they do not, he said, he will appoint new trustees. That deadline is in mid-March.

Meanwhile, Mercer has promised to continue the legal contest. "Obviously, we regret the decision by Judge Whitmire," said Joe Claxton, general assistant to Mercer President Kirby Godsey. "While we have respect for the court, we feel their decision is clearly in error. We will appeal."

But the immediate implications of Whitmire's ruling are unclear. Mercer may decide to ask a higher court to issue a restraining order that would prohibit further trustee action until the case is appealed.

In the interim, SavTift members are happy, the organization's president said.

"We never gave up hope," Gail Neal told the Atlanta Constitution. "We always felt like we were right and that it would come out right. We are thrilled, happy, delighted and eager to work."

SavTift has raised more than \$280,000 in pledges to help re-open the school. It has recruited 80 people who will donate three days per year to recruit students.

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(Contributing to this story was William Neal, associate editor of Georgia Baptists' Christian Index.)

Maryland/Delaware Elects
Editor, Division Director

N-CO
(Md-Del.)

LUTHERVILLE, Md. (BP)--The general mission board of the Baptist Convention of Maryland/Delaware has elected Robert E. Allen editor of the Baptist True Union, the convention's newsjournal, effective immediately.

The 59-member board also elected foreign missionary John L. Faris Jr. director of the resource management/stewardship promotion division for the two-state convention.

Allen, 32, has been a member of the True Union staff since June 1985, first as assistant editor and recently as associate editor. He replaces W. Fletcher Allen, who vacated the position Sept. 1, 1987, to become editor of the Tennessee Baptist Convention's Baptist and Reflector.

A native of Marion, Ill., Allen is a graduate of Southern Illinois University and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. He was a reporter for the Sullivan Daily Times in Sullivan, Ind., 1978-81. While in seminary he held internships at the Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine and the Western Recorder, newsjournals for Arkansas and Kentucky Baptists respectively. He was editor of The Towers, campus newspaper at Southern Seminary, one year and worked one year as news director in the seminary's communications office.

He is married to the former Vicki Johnston of Little Rock, Ark. They have one son.

Faris, 38, administrator of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board's Rwanda Baptist Mission since 1981, will join the Maryland/Delaware convention staff in July. In his new position he will be responsible for business operations and will head one of three major divisions in the convention's staff structure.

A native of Rock Hill, S.C., Faris is a graduate of Wofford College in Spartanburg, S.C., Winthrop College in Rock Hill, S.C.; and Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Wake Forest, N.C.

Faris and his wife, the former Deborah Watson, have three children.

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High-Visibility Christians
Vulnerable To Evil: Gregory

By Toby Druin

N-CO
(Texas Std.)

Baptist Press
3/14/88

DALLAS (BP)--People in places of high visibility in God's service also are vulnerable to the forces of evil, Joel Gregory warned, challenging Christian ministers to maintain their integrity.

Attorneys or even brain surgeons can lead any kind of life across the weekend and then perform flawlessly in the courtroom or operating room, he said, but if a minister loses his integrity he "loses it all."

Gregory, pastor of Travis Avenue Baptist Church in Fort Worth, Texas, and president of the state Baptist convention, spoke to the Texas Baptist executive board at its spring meeting in Dallas, March 8.

He said recently the "question in everyone's mind is the impact on Christian witness across our nation because of the publicity and visibility given high-profile individuals who contradict that which they spoke. I am asked what impact will this make on the lost world around us."

Although he never mentioned them by name, Gregory apparently was referring to the recent revelations regarding evangelist Jimmy Swaggart and the earlier stories about Jim and Tammy Bakker and others.

Rather than being worried so much about their impact on a non-Christian world, Gregory said he was concerned about the integrity of his own life and witness.

He cannot be responsible for the evangelical world or even for Southern Baptists, he said, "But I can be responsible in my life that as a person of visibility I will also be a person of viability at the point of integrity."

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He believes, the Fort Worth pastor said, "those in places of visibility in God's service are also in places of vulnerability to the Adversary (Satan), and it behooves every one of us to fall before God and beg for grace in our lives, for transparency, for authenticity, for genuineness that is beyond any reproach from those outside and inside the family of faith."

The loss of integrity in some places does not mean witness has ceased and abated in other places, he said, noting he had only hours before been able to share the gospel with a woman on an airplane.

It will continue, he said, "as long as you and I are responsible for the integrity of our own lives and ministry. God give us the grace, provident, sovereign, protecting grace that it be so."

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Atlanta Downtown Church
Approves Process To Move

N-HMB

Baptist Press
3/14/88

ATLANTA (BP)--Members of First Baptist Church Atlanta have approved a proposal authorizing Pastor Charles Stanley and a committee he will appoint to negotiate the sale of their downtown property and move to the suburbs.

Stanley, former president of the Southern Baptist Convention, and his committee were asked "to proceed immediately" with selling the church's 16 acres in the Peachtree-Fifth Street area, and with purchasing new property in the suburbs on which to build.

Only a handful of members stood in opposition to the proposal from the church's deacons. Stanley estimated the total number of people who voted against the move in two morning worship services March 13 was less than 100.

At the two services, the 2,600-seat sanctuary was packed. Most voted in favor of the proposal presented by Guy Mosier, chairman of the church's deacons.

Full authority to negotiate the sale of the existing property and purchase of a new site was given to the committee to be appointed by the pastor. The committee was asked to "take all required action" and "execute all required documents."

No indication was given during the Sunday morning worship services where the church would relocate or an expected sale price for the downtown property.

During a presentation to the church on the previous Sunday and discussion that night, Stanley told the congregation at least 14 sites were under consideration.

Stanley told news reporters after the service the process could take as long as three years but that he is anxious to move as quickly as possible.

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3 'Angels' Look
Over Atkinson

By Marv Knox

F-10

Baptist Press
3/14/88

LOS ANGELES (BP)--Joe Atkinson believes in angels; he's got three of his own.

Atkinson won an unprecedented third Angel Award, this one for best gospel album of the year, for his latest recording, "A Man for All Time." The Angel Awards are presented by Religion in Media, an organization created to honor outstanding Christian performers in motion pictures, television, radio and the record industry.

A Southern Baptist music evangelist for more than 30 years, Atkinson previously won the best gospel album category for "Pressing On" and took top honors in the best gospel music video category for "The Singer Comes Home."

Atkinson is staff evangelist at Fielder Road Baptist Church in Arlington, Texas. The Dallas/Fort Worth suburb has been his home for 21 years, and he has been appointed goodwill ambassador for his adopted hometown.

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When his latest Angel Award was presented in Hollywood, Atkinson was in Nashville, conducting the music in a revival meeting. "Awards are nice things, but ... when God calls you to do something, you need to do that as best you're able," he explains. "You have to do what God called you to do."

That attitude reflects his commitment to God, family, local church and community.

"Life, for the child of God, is built upon priorities," he says. "My priorities are first to the Lord, then to the family. And loyalty to church and community are an outgrowth of family loyalty. My role is to be what God called me to be; but I'm not an evangelist first, I'm a husband and father first."

That's why, despite a ministry that constantly follows the road, he emphasizes home, community commitment and involvement in individual churches, he says.

"There's a responsibility to community, a place God uniquely led me to 20 years ago," he says, noting he's intentionally immersed himself in the life of the city of Arlington. "I have a responsibility to be faithful there, as I have to be faithful here in this ministry."

And of his relationship to his own church and other local congregations, he adds: "My wife, Judy, and I both believe God is blessed most by faithfulness. Christ died for the church, and I'm supposed to be faithful, too."

"I do a lot of area crusades, but I really love the local church. That's where the warfare (with Satan) is fought."

"The Singer Comes Home," Atkinson's video, stresses those themes. It was adapted from a one-hour documentary of the same title that was produced by Home Box Office. It was taped in Arlington, primarily from his live performances, and has aired on the ACTS television network. "It's a tribute to faithfulness," he says, and "to my roots in gospel music."

Atkinson launched his career with a first-place performance on "The Original Amateur Hour." He is a graduate of Baylor University in Waco, Texas, and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas.

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First Order Placed
For 1991 Hymnal

By Charles Willis

N-SSB
Baptist Press
3/14/88

NASHVILLE (BP)--First Baptist Church of Richmond, Ky., has placed the first order for a hymnal that will not exist until 1991.

The church ordered 750 copies of a new Southern Baptist hymnal that is in the early planning stages. It placed a pre-publication order with the Louisville (Ky.) Baptist Book Store Feb. 24.

Dick Ham, minister of music at the church since 1983, said he placed the order following church approval in a business meeting because he wanted his church "to have the distinction of placing the first order and to demonstrate their faith in the denomination and its agencies."

Ham, who was a consultant in the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board's church music department for almost 16 years, said he recalled some churches placed early orders when the department produced the 1975 edition of the "Baptist Hymnal."

In a letter to Wesley L. Forbis, editor-in-chief of the hymnal, Ham said the order "represents my faith in the editorial personnel of the church music department."

First Baptist of Richmond anticipated the need for new hymnals because its copies of the 1956 edition of the hymnal "are finally showing wear," he said. A memorial fund has been established to accumulate money for the next three years to fund the purchase, he added.

"There are many hymnals available, but this is the only hymnal that is prepared by Southern Baptists for Southern Baptists," he said. "I have no serious questions in my mind about the content. There may be some hymns in it that our church members will not like, but I haven't found a hymnal that didn't have a few I don't like."

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Ham had looked at other hymnals, "but they don't say 'Baptist' on them, and that's important to me," he said.

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Lawmakers Hear Of New
African Hunger Crisis

By Kathy Palen

N- BJC

Baptist Press
3/14/88

WASHINGTON (BP)--At a time when Southern Baptist hunger donations continue to decline, the hunger crisis in several African countries continues to escalate.

During a House hearing, U.S. government and United Nations officials testified of the growing hunger crisis in Angola, Ethiopia, Mozambique and Sudan.

"This hearing focuses on the emergency needs of Africans in the continent's most emergency-affected countries," said Charles L. Gladson, the Agency for International Development's assistant administrator for Africa. "There are no countries in Africa now where life is more tenuous for so many millions or where it is more challenging and difficult to meet short-term, life-sustaining needs. The situations in each country can be mistaken as similar; in fact, they are each very different and unique.

"At the same time, the factors driving the emergency needs of these four countries have shifted in a very significant and telling fashion. In the past, the impact of natural disasters - drought, flood, pestilence and disease -- was the prime factor, the momentum behind the emergency need. The suffering of innocent men, women and children elicited an immediate humanitarian outpouring from Americans.

"Now, however, and although natural factors are still present and important in each of these countries, man-made factors predominate and drive the seemingly intractable emergency situations and ever-escalating needs."

Members of the House Select Committee on Hunger and Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Africa heard witnesses testify that:

-- Angola, one of the wealthiest countries in Africa, is experiencing serious shortages of food and other necessities as a result of civil war and economic mismanagement. An estimated 2.7 million of the country's 8 million people are in immediate need of emergency food assistance. Estimates predict the country will require 250,000 metric tons of international food assistance for the crop year beginning April 1.

-- Ethiopia, considered the poorest nation in the world, has yet to recover from the devastating famine of 1984-85. Continuing periods of drought coupled with intensifying civil strife have crippled the country. About 7 million Ethiopians are believed to be at risk, a number almost as great as during the 1984-85 famine.

-- Mozambique faces a dual crisis of millions of rural people without food because of severe civil conflict and drought and millions of urban people without food because of extremely low domestic food production. The emergency situation in Mozambique's rural areas is considered possibly the worst in Africa because the civil war makes food delivery extremely dangerous throughout the country.

By the end of 1988, more than 1 million Mozambicans will have fled to other southern African countries, observers predict.

-- Sudan also is plagued by civil strife and drought. Of the 6 million people living in southern Sudan, about 1.5 million are estimated to be affected by the country's civil war. A drought in western Sudan also threatens food supplies for 1.75 million people.

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435 Malawians Receive
Christ In Food Project

N- FMB

Baptist Press
3/14/88

LILONGWE, Malawi (BP)--Through a Southern Baptist relief program promising to keep nearly 11,000 Malawians fed, 435 people have professed faith in Jesus.

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Jim Parker, of Memphis, Tenn., and a team of Malawian Baptists led 47 people to decide to accept Christ as their Savior one day at a distribution center where expected food was delayed in coming. Several of the new Christians, who live in an area with no Baptist church, asked the Baptists to start one in their village.

Malawi has been plagued by destructive insects in the north, drought in some areas, too much rain in others and more than 300,000 displaced Mozambicans who have fled fighting in their own country.

Malawian pastors and Southern Baptist missionaries have worked together to train Baptists to tell people about Jesus as they distribute maize, the country's food staple. Southern Baptists plan to spend more than \$500,000 this year in the project.

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Watson Retires After
34 Years At NOBTS

By Breena Kent Paine

F- (CO
(NOBTS) Baptist Press
3/14/88

NEW ORLEANS (BP)--After 34 years, Stanley Jack Watson approaches retirement as the professor who has served New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary the longest.

The professor of psychology and counseling from Randlett, Okla., first came to New Orleans Seminary as a student in 1948. At that time, the seminary was Baptist Bible Institute and was located in the Garden District of New Orleans.

"In those days, a person was either a pastor or a missionary," said Watson, who arrived at the seminary with his wife, Johnie, and three sons. "We had such a limited curriculum then, with only a course or two in the areas that we now have full degrees in."

Watson received bachelor's and master's degrees in 1951 from New Orleans Seminary. After obtaining the doctorate in religious education from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas, he began teaching at New Orleans Seminary as a professor of youth education in 1954 and received a doctorate in education in 1969. From 1971 to 1977, he was chairman of the division of religious education and began teaching psychology and counseling in 1978.

Now that he is retiring, New Orleans' only professor with two doctorate degrees plans to pursue a doctor of philosophy. Watson also would like to finish writing four books he has started, continue his counseling practice at Spring Meadow, his farm in Picayune, Miss., and direct the training and supervision at Family Care Counseling Institute in eastern New Orleans.

Watson, who feels a professor's role should be "to be professional in our field, and then to model our ministry," has counseled many students during his tenure at New Orleans Seminary.

One of the main problems he has found is in family relationships. Often, a couple will grow distant from one another as the student develops spiritually through his studies and the spouse supports the family and raises children. Problems arise when couple competes instead of cooperates, and the husband does not show "his generosity in helping her, and his appreciation for what she does in supporting him."

"One thing I've noticed about young seminary people is they need to take their studies more seriously and take themselves less seriously," Watson said. "They need to relax and enjoy being who they are in ministry. Because God called them as persons. They're not playing a role, they're being themselves. I wish wives would do that, too."

Watson has been pastor of churches in Oklahoma, Alabama, Mississippi and Louisiana, and has been president of the Gulf Coast Region of the American Association of Marriage and Family Therapists.

Concerning the many years he spent as a professor at New Orleans Seminary, he said. "It's been a lot of fun. It's the type of thing I'd have been willing to do for nothing." But here they've given me a salary for it."

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(BP) photo available upon request from New Orleans Seminary

Expert Says Churches
Can Aid Child Protection

By Pat Cole

N-(O)
(SBTS)

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP)--Churches can play an important role in curbing the problem of missing and exploited children and ministering to the parents of abducted children, a national expert on the issue said.

John B. Raybun, deputy director of the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children based in Washington, called on churches to begin educating children and parents on ways to prevent the sexual exploitation of children.

Raybun, an ordained Southern Baptist minister and a member of First Baptist Church in Herndon, Va., conducted a workshop in Louisville, Ky., on the church's role in protecting children. The event was sponsored by the Gheens Center for Christian Family Ministry at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

Raybun said churches need to make children aware of who the potential child molesters are, stressing that most molesters are not the "traditional ghouls who wear trench coats."

"We must understand that most people who molest children aren't strangers," he explained. "They are sometimes next door neighbors and acquaintances of the family."

Raybun said educating children about preventing child exploitation should be done in the context of a program that teaches children about human sexuality and family life. He said children should be taught how to "get away" from potential exploiters and when to scream for help.

Parents, he emphasized, can protect their children from molestation and abduction by always knowing their children's whereabouts. He said the vast majority of children who are sexually molested are "missing" from their parents.

Missing, he explained, doesn't necessarily mean a child has been abducted, but may simply mean the parents don't know where their children are.

He suggested some safeguards: Require children to tell parents when they are going to visit a neighbor and when they will return; stress to children never to get in a car with anyone without informing parents; and carefully check references and identification on baby-sitters.

Raybun urged churches to take precautions to avoid hiring people with histories of exploiting children. He recommended churches do police record checks on daycare workers and other staff members who spend extended periods of time with children or youth.

In addition to prevention programs, churches also can provide an important ministry to parents of missing children, Raybun said.

Those parents are "going through the worst type of trauma," he said. "It's as if a loved one dies, but they cannot resolve the grief process."

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Inter-Cultural Communication
Said To Set Denominational Growth

N-(O)
(GGTS)

Baptist Press
3/14/88

MILL VALLEY, Calif. (BP)--Southern Baptist faces are not carbon copies of the same Anglo caricature of yesteryear, and future growth of the denomination will be determined by inter-cultural communication, an ethnic studies specialist predicted.

Speaking at Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary, Donald E. Sewell provided insight into "implications of the growing multi-ethnic Southern Baptist Convention," during his faculty inaugural address.

Sewell, assistant professor of religious education and director of the seminary's ethnic leadership development program, contended as more first- and second-generation immigrants are added to the ranks of Southern Baptists, ethnocentric tendencies may hinder church growth.

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"The essence of the gospel must be distinguished from cultural forms of expression if our churches are to grow," he said.

By the year 2000, more than 8,000 ethnic language churches and missions should be in the SBC, Sewell said. Such growth will require Southern Baptists to analyze their identity and mission as a denomination, he added.

"Unfortunately, the average layperson of a convention church will have little awareness of the rise of ethnic congregations," Sewell said. "More sadly, this ignorance may also contribute to unawareness of the need for more ethnic Southern Baptist congregations.

"By the very cultural complexity of the United States, the church must assume some of the mindset formerly taken only by the foreign missionary. The rising numbers of ethnic immigrants on the American shores bid Christianity to display a full-blown witness."

Sewell told seminarians the way Southern Baptists deal with ethnics within and without the convention walls will either bless or curse them.

"Thousands of ethnic churches can be brought into the fold, or thousands may be silently repelled by insensitivity and misunderstandings," he said.

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Black Southern Baptists
Challenged To Start Churches

By Leisa Hammett-Goad

N-HMB
Baptist Press
3/14/88

ONTARIO, Calif. (BP)--Leaders from across California and the nation met in Ontario, Calif., in mid March to challenge each other to sponsor and start new churches.

The Southern Baptist Home Mission Board conference on black church starting was one of five scheduled in metropolitan cities throughout the United States.

Historically, black Southern Baptists have not started churches, said Willie McPherson, HMB church starting consultant for black churches. Instead, white Southern Baptist churches have started black churches.

McPherson said blacks have not deliberately started new churches, adding, many black pastors, like some white pastors, wanted to "protect their turf" or grow "super churches." When new black churches were formed, most resulted from church splits, he said.

McPherson said black churches must begin to deliberately start new churches because millions of Americans do not know Christ.

LeRoy Gainey, professor of religious education at Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary, in Mill Valley, Calif., also challenged the group of black Baptist pastors to start churches because of the brokenness of their race.

Gainey, one of only a few black professors in SBC seminaries, said blacks are the most broken people in America -- suffering from crime, illiteracy, teen pregnancies, AIDS, drug abuse and unemployment.

"Jesus got in the midst of pain and became one with the broken. That's what church starting in the black community is all about," said Gainey.

Sam Birky, church extension director for the Southern Baptist General Convention of California, and Don Venosdel, director of the SBGCC missions growth division, agreed church starting is a cooperative task among Anglos, black and ethnics.

Venosdel said society creates walls between races: "One of Christ's mission endeavors was tearing down walls. (But), we have a knack for teaching wall building. We even make the bricks and supply the mortar. Jesus talked of tearing down walls of stereotypes and superiority. He talked about separatism and all the things that divide," said Venosdel. "God sent you on a mission to every creature ... not a mission of selective evangelism."

McPherson agreed blacks should not make it their mission just to start black churches, although blacks will be the first they most likely will encounter.

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Winston Phillips was one of about five California black Baptist pastors who are starting churches, some integrated. When Phillips started the Spirit of Truth Baptist Church, he did not aim to start a black, Anglo or an integrated church but to reach the community. The church which now meets in a Howard Johnson's has equal number of Anglos and blacks and a small percentage of Asians.

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Vision Spawns
Church In Bay

By Jim Hogg

F-10
(GGBTS)

Baptist Press
3/14/88

SAUSALITO, Calif. (BP)--Vision can be a hard thing to grasp, especially when it sits in the middle of the water.

Richardson Bay Community Church was born out of a vision to reach the waterfront people of Sausalito, Calif., a city located immediately south of Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary's main campus in Mill Valley.

A traditional approach would not work, concerned Baptists discovered. If the gospel were to be proclaimed in the waterfront setting, people would have to risk failure, they decided.

Doug Storms, a theology student at Golden Gate Seminary was one of the first to envision reaching the community, where many residents live in boats.

A year ago, Storms and another Golden Gate student, Mark Cox, moved to the Sausalito waterfront. Storms related his struggle over his desire to go to the waterfront: "I had to pray about where God was leading me. Was I going for the glamor of it, or because God was calling me there?"

Storms had planned to leave on a seminary church planting team at the end of the spring semester. Once again, he had to wrestle with God's call. He decided that God wanted him to stay and minister in Sausalito, not to go on the team.

During the summer he did bivocational work, using his training as a scuba diver to support himself. "It is amazing how God can use gifts," Storms acknowledged. "On the waterfront, diving is a valuable skill." Because the cloudy water is dangerous, well-trained divers are in demand.

His diving ability enabled Storms to fit into the community. He lived and worked there, forming a bond with the other residents. "I had to learn to be a servant and to be available to the people," he said. "We (Storms and Cox) built relationships with people around us. We had to be servants of the community."

A deep friendship grew between Storms and Peter Romanowsky, a Christian who lives on the waterfront. "He gave me courage," Storms said. "We prayed all summer and discovered that the waterfront people wanted a church."

The church was started through one-on-one contacts. It eventually grew to a point where the congregation needed a place to meet. Once again, God answered prayer.

Ted Stewart, who had been looking for eight years to give his vessel away to a church, donated the Sea Lark Tugboat. The tug is two-thirds sunk into the bay, so Storms and a group of men have attempted to raise it. They will continue to try until the entire Sea Lark is above water. Even with so much of the boat submerged, the church now has more than double the space of its original meeting place.

Storms' vision for the Richardson Bay church involves more than just a Sunday worship service. He sees the Sea Lark as a center of discipleship, Bible study and a place to "get away from it all."

The church meets for worship on Sundays at 1 p.m., and members are shuttled to the Sea Lark by boats. A Bible study also takes place on Thursday nights.

G. William Schweer, professor of evangelism at Golden Gate Seminary, has supported the church. He has been instrumental in organizing it and has preached on several occasions.

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Storms is in the supervised ministry program at Golden Gate and uses the Richardson Bay church as his ministry setting. He also is in the church start internship program and is assisted by the Sunday school department of the Southern Baptist General Convention of California. Storms and Cox are members of the First Baptist Church of Sausalito, where Golden Gate student Wayne Strauss is pastor.

"It is a very unique situation," Storms said of his ministry. "The door opens, and you walk through. The standard way of starting a church in this community did not work. "It is a miracle how it all came together. We had to step out on faith. The field is white unto harvest, and the people are very receptive to kindness."

He emphasized the importance of being willing to fail: "Someone has got to pay the price. If Christ is to be manifested, he must be seen in our lives. This is my calling, and I'm here for as long as it takes."

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Jim Hogg is a communications associate at Golden Gate Seminary

Southern Baptist's 'Love'
Leads To Job With JustLife

By Kathy Palen

F - BIC

Baptist Press
3/14/88

WASHINGTON (BP)--Last summer Van Temple decided to follow his real love.

For 13 years the Southern Baptist layman had been an executive with the city of Dallas. Although he said he enjoyed his work, he wanted a position that would combine his administration and management skills with Christian social action.

"My job with the city was my income, but my work with low-income housing and hunger groups was really my love," he said.

Temple found a combination of the two -- his skills and his love -- as associate executive director of JustLife, a Philadelphia-based Catholic/Protestant coalition that promotes a "consistent life ethic" -- a view supporting the sanctity of life of the unborn, the hungry and people threatened by nuclear weapons -- through both a political action committee and an education fund.

"Working for the city of Dallas, I got to manage large organizations and lots of money," he said. "At JustLife, it's kind of the opposite. There's not a lot of money and not a lot of staff, but what we're doing is really interesting to me.

"It has been a coming out of the closet, so to speak, about what my beliefs are. I don't think I should say to everyone, 'You ought to believe everything that I believe.' But it is my responsibility to take action on things about which I do have some insight."

The most recent project on which Temple and his new organization have taken action is an election study guide that rates all members of Congress based on key votes on abortion, economic justice and the nuclear arms race.

"Scores of election study guides exist but 'JustLife/88' is the first and only one that is committed to reversing the nuclear arms race and ending abortion and empowering the poor for self-sufficiency," said Ron Sider, JustLife executive director, who described the guide as reflecting a "commitment to the sanctity of human life both before and after birth."

Twelve members of Congress scored 100 percent on the 15 votes -- five each on abortion, nuclear arms, and domestic and international economic justice -- tabulated by the election study guide. Fifty-five members scored 80 percent or higher.

In addition to the tabulations, "JustLife/88" contains contributions by evangelist Billy Graham; Chicago Archbishop Joseph Cardinal Bernardin; Rep. Paul Henry, R-Mich.; hunger lobbyist Arthur Simon; and Rep. Mary Rose Oaker, D-Ohio.

Temple said the No. 1 pitfall JustLife tried to avoid in preparing its election study guide was becoming dogmatic about the guide's results.

"The guide is a beginning point," he said. "What voters really need to do is study the individual person. There isn't always a right vote, but this kind of guide can give a flavor of where the person is coming from."

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